

**Remarks Following Discussions With
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Secretary General Jaap de Hoop
Scheffer**

January 30, 2004

President Bush. Mr. Secretary General, welcome. We are proud that you're here. The Secretary General and I have had a good discussion about NATO, my administration's commitment to a strong and vibrant NATO, our mutual desire to make the world more peaceful through freedom. I appreciate your willingness to discuss important theaters like Afghanistan and Iraq, the need for us to make sure our militaries are transformed and modern. I know that we will have a good working relationship, and I know you'll do a great job on behalf of all of us who treasure the NATO—the NATO Alliance.

So welcome, sir.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Also, from my side, may I say that I entirely share your opinion, as we discussed in our conversation. But NATO is about values. NATO is defending values which might be normal for us, but our—in other parts of the world, less normal.

And that's why we are in Afghanistan fighting terrorism. And NATO is going to take a larger role in Afghanistan. That's what we discussed. We have, of course, touched upon Iraq, the political developments in Iraq, the upcoming 1st of May for the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq, and a possible greater NATO role after that. We discussed the Balkans. We have discussed NATO-Russian relationship.

In other words, the full range of subjects NATO is dealing with, defending these values as an organization which is undergoing a fundamental transformation process, taking in, in a short time, new member states, seven new member states—it's a matter of weeks—transforming into an organization which can defend those values wherever there is a necessity in the world—be it in the Balkans, where NATO has been very successful be it in Afghanistan; be it in Iraq, where NATO is now supporting the Polish-led multinational division and where NATO might take on a greater role when the sovereign

Iraqi Government would ask NATO to do that.

So I very much enjoyed, Mr. President, my conversation with you. And I'm sure that with your support, with the support of the United States, and all the other NATO Alliance, we are going to make this a success.

Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Digest of Other
White House Announcements**

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, at the Capitol Hilton Hotel, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the Alfalfa Club Dinner.

January 26

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Little Rock, AR, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Mary Lynn Roberson. Then, at the Baptist Health Medical Center, he participated in a roundtable discussion on medical liability reform.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, the President hosted an annual meeting and dinner with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and combat commanders.

The President announced his intention to nominate Pamela M. Iovino to be Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Congressional Affairs.

The President announced his intention to appoint Dionel E. Aviles and Susan C. Schwab as members of the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy.